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The Campaign of Chancellorsville: a Strategic and Tactical Study.

By JOHN BIGELOW, Jr., Major U. S. Army, retired. (New Haven: Yale University Press. Pp. xvi, 528.)

In a monumental work of more than five hundred pages Major John Bigelow has shown that too much cannot be said on a great theme and that it is never too late to undertake it. Many good books have dealt with Chancellorsville and told the sad story of a great, brave, and undismayed army which was foiled and disastrously beaten by a force of half its size and driven back to its camps. So much has been written that it almost seemed that the subject was exhausted, and that it had passed into the realm of ancient history. If such was ever likely to occur, the story has been happily resurrected by Major Bigelow, who has also brought out much new matter and woven the tangled threads again into heroic form. The professional student, whose judgment is often warped by enthusiasm for details of strategy and tactics, may possibly be wide of the mark when he predicts the fate of any book of historical or technical character, but he may safely recommend the *Campaign of Chancellorsville* as containing enough of tragedy and comedy to satisfy those who seek for lighter reading.

The author follows correct models of historical and professional narratives, at times approaching brilliancy in his method of grouping facts and conclusions. Criticism is modest throughout, never extravagant in praise, or over-mild in censure, but rather leaving the judgment of events to the reader himself. Very satisfactory is the method of giving "the mental point of view and field of vision of the opposing commanders" in order that the reader may keep informed "as to how much or how little each commander knew about the tactical and strategic situation". Instead of viewing the campaign from the vantage-point of time and years of study, we are given numerous citations and references to the statements of the actors themselves.

In this generation we cease to feel an interest in *what* our fathers fought about in the Civil War, but we are quite keen to know *how* they fought. We need no better example than this. The recital loses nothing of interest because we see, overshadowing it all, the majestic forms of Lee and Jackson. It fires us with Anglo-Saxon pride of race and strengthens the hope that the country may continue to breed such men for the battles yet to come.

History and biography and criticism in military matters usually delight to contemplate the roar of artillery and leaden hail of infantry bullets, with attendant carnage of blood and suffering. But there is much more to a campaign, as Major Bigelow well demonstrates, that is of just as absorbing interest. This is particularly noticeable in the attention given to cavalry operations. Cavalry leadership was perhaps no better or worse than the leadership of other arms, but cavalry action was generally overshadowed by the dramatic collision of forces ten times more numerous. We here find all kinds of examples of cavalry

action, strategical and tactical, good and bad. Referring only to the good, we find few better than Fitz-Hugh Lee's reconnaissance to Hartwood Church, W. E. Jones's operations with 2000 cavalry against the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, guarded by 34,000 men present for duty, Harrison with thirty men at Fleming's Cross Roads, McVickar at Alsop's Farm. Perhaps the author is rather hard on Lieutenant-Colonel John S. Mosby in his discussion of that officer's military status. Mosby had enthusiastic approval of such high-toned soldiers as Lee and Stuart, not to speak of U. S. Grant and his opponent in Loudoun County, General Charles Russell Lowell, who wrote to his wife, "Mosby is an honorable foe and should be treated as such." The cavalry actions at Miskell's Farm, Thompson's Corner, Aldie, Dranesville, Herndon Station, as described in this book, had no characteristic of guerrilla action and might serve to-day to teach a lesson to cavalry.

The greatest fault in military historical works written in this country is the worthless maps. The author has helped us greatly by his forty-seven maps, sketches, and plans in colors, showing the positions of troops at successive stages of operations described. It is suggested that, as the woods exert such an influence on every phase of the conflict, an additional color to show wooded areas would have greatly improved the general value of the work. EBEN SWIFT.

Reconstruction in Texas. By CHARLES WILLIAM RAMSDELL, Ph.D. [Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. XXXVI., no. 1.] (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company. 1910. Pp. 324.)

THE last few years have brought forth numerous studies in the Reconstruction period of our history. Among these, hardly is there a better than that of Professor Ramsdell's *Reconstruction in Texas*. Dr. Ramsdell has had unusual advantages in the matter of access to original sources. He had at his service the Executive Correspondence of the state, which included a large number of letters from governors in their official capacity; its Reconstruction Correspondence, which embodied a great many letters from army officers and from the Freedmen's Bureau; its Executive Records, which contained proclamations and letters from other departments of the government, including the letter-book of the secretary of state; the Johnson Papers in the Library of Congress; and the Roberts Papers. Besides these sources he availed himself of the files of practically all the newspapers published contemporaneously in the state. He also had access to certain books and periodicals, public documents and pamphlets, not usually available.

Dr. Ramsdell leads up to his work with true insight by dealing with conditions in the state prior to the outbreak of the war, and emphasizes the unique position held by Texas throughout the bitter struggle; certain distinct problems were presented in her reconstruction, which were not common in other of the Confederate States. He shows that on ac-